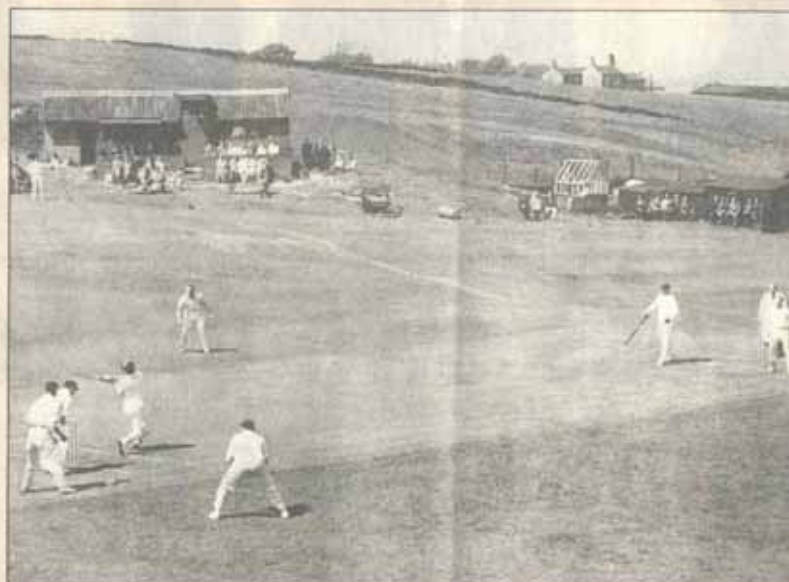


Club 'an integral part of the community'



The Rastrick New Road team pictured in 1921 and an overview of the ground taken in the early 1950s

BADGER Hill Cricket Club was originally known as Rastrick New Road Sunday School C.C..

The earliest surviving minute is dated 1896, when those in attendance voted to have a cricket club for another year. This appears to have been an annual practice until 1900 when the vote appears to have been dispensed with.

The club was an integral part of both Rastrick New Road church and the local community.

Fund-raising brought the whole community together in well organised occasions such as Minstrel Shows and 'At Homes' events.

The club didn't raise funds just for itself either. Charity matches were played to garner money for various other causes.

We often think of cricket as predominantly a men's sport, even today. Yet cricket was played by women as far back as the early twentieth century. For example, Rastrick New Road Sunday School fielded a ladies team in the 1930s.

In 1937 the club's 1st XI were League champions and Lumb Cup winners. The 2nd XI also scooped a pair of trophies. In 1950 Rastrick New Road also scooped

the Crossland Trophy.

In society at large, the 1980s saw women finally beginning to gain acceptance as equals with men. Trevor Bottomley believed this applied to local cricket too.

He registered his daughter, Suzanne, the club's scorer, as a player. When they were short of players, she put down her pencil and picked up her bat instead!

She also remembers that the opposition often didn't know how to bowl to her, thinking they had to be 'gentle'. However, she was no slouch with the bat - her favourite shot was the square cut - and the opposition would often end up collecting the ball from the wrong side of the boundary rope.

In 1987 Rastrick New Road Sunday School C.C. wanted to join the growing number of clubs playing cricket on Sundays.

The Sunday School, however, were opposed to this, and the club faced a difficult decision - stay with the Sunday School and don't play on Sundays, or go it alone?

Following much soul-searching, the club decided to break away. It was forced

to change its name, and so ended an association which had lasted over a hundred years.

They decided to take their new name from the name of their ground - and Badger Hill CC was born.

The end of the association between Rastrick New Road Sunday School and the cricket club was an amicable one.

While the Sunday School did not agree with playing cricket on Sundays, they saw it as a matter for the cricketers' consciences - and did not condemn the club for its decision.

Indeed, Steve Goodall, a lay preacher at the Sunday School, continued to play for the Badgers and was secretary of the club until about six years ago - but he never played on Sundays!

On June 3, 1989 tragedy struck Badger Hill when Trevor Bottomley died during a match. Trevor had been a hard-working and long-serving member of Badger Hill Cricket Club both on and off the field. He is greatly missed by his family and the club.

In the mid-1990s, Badger Hill graduated into the Huddersfield Central League after decades in the Huddersfield

Association. This meant away matches in Batley, Dewsbury and on the outskirts of Wakefield, Barnsley and Sheffield.

Around this time, the club was disappointed to miss out on a large development grant to help build a new clubhouse.

Just as it seemed that things couldn't get any worse, they did. In 2002 vandals torched the 'old' clubhouse - and the club was left with nothing. Except the ground and its stalwart players.

Many Badger Hill players felt that after the fire the end was near for the club. But not everyone was prepared to give in. The community that is Badger Hill C.C. began to fight back.

Today the Badgers run two teams and new players are slowly swelling the number of club members.

There is still a long way to go before the club is able to re-live the heady days of the post-war period, but there is a wonderful spirit of community at Badger Hill - from the chairman right down to the tea ladies - that binds the club together.